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ABSTRACT

By making simple bookmarks, students in grades 6-8 practice summarizing, recognizing symbols, and writing reviews in these two 50-minute class sessions--all while writing for an authentic audience. Student objectives for this lesson are that they will: write summaries and reviews for books they read; identify appropriate symbols that relate to their books; interact with classmates to give and receive feedback; and explore how audience and purpose shape their writing. The instructional plan, a list of web resources, student assessment/reflection activities, and a list of National Council of Teachers of English/International Reading Association (NCTE/IRA) Standards addressed in the project are included. A planning sheet for bookmark book reports, a rubric for bookmark book reports, and two sample bookmarks are attached. (RS)

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ED 476 410

Book Report Alternative: Summary, Symbol, and Analysis in Bookmarks

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Grade Band

6-8

Estimated Lesson Time

Two 50-minute class sessions

Overview

Students love to make bookmarks on the computer because they get to share their ideas with others. Consider the following exchange and you'll see why *teachers* love this project: "What background color will you choose for your bookmark? What goes with Achren's character? She's so evil that it will have to be red," commented Hannah as she worked. Samie disagreed, and the discussion that ensued had them pawing through the book, justifying their preferences.

By making these simple bookmarks, students practice in summarizing, recognizing symbols, and writing reviews—all while writing for an authentic audience. What more could a teacher ask for?

From Theory to Practice

One summer school student in a class on Creative Writing and Technology raced up to the teacher and exclaimed, "I'm a real writer now. Nobody else in my family has ever been published!" Through the magic of desktop publishing, students who would otherwise be voiceless now view themselves as real authors.

Why? The sense of audience makes a huge difference in the quality of the work that students do. When students are writing pieces that will be read by classmates and other students, their attitudes toward writing change. Suddenly the grammar rules that were "dumb" matter. Accuracy, mood, and tone are all important. The net result is that the students take complete ownership of their work.

Adapted from Gretchen Lee. 2000. "Technology in the Language Arts Classroom: Is It Worth the Trouble?" *Voices from the Middle* 7.3 (March): 24-32.

Student Objectives

Students will

- write summaries and reviews for a book they have read.
- identify appropriate symbols that relate to their books.
- interact with classmates to give and receive feedback.
- explore how audience and purpose shape their writing.

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Resources

- Bookmark Planning Sheet
- Rubric for Bookmark Book Reviews
- Example *Doom Stone* bookmark
- Example *Hobbit* bookmark

Instructional Plan

Resources

- Copies of the example *Hobbit* and *Doom Stone* bookmarks, or create overhead transparencies to share with students
- Copies of the Bookmark Planning Sheet
- Copies of the Rubric for Bookmark Book Reviews
- Computers with word processor software
- Laminating supplies or tape
- Optional—yarn, colored paper, markers, and other decorations

Preparation

1. Before this lesson, students will read a book independently, in literature circles, or as a whole class.
2. Ask students to bring copies of the book that will be the focus of their bookmark to class for reference.
3. Make copies or overheads of the sample bookmarks, the Bookmark Planning Sheet, and the Rubric for Bookmark Book Reviews.
4. Practice the steps for creating bookmarks with a word processor using your computers and software. You may want to provide your students with more specific instructions that are customized for your software program.
5. Find sources for clip art that are appropriate for your class. Typically a small clip art library is included with word processing programs; however, additional images may be needed. Have URLs on hand that students can use to find images for their bookmarks.

   Optional: Depending upon your goals and the resources available, students can also draw original images on their bookmarks with markers, creating images in a program such as Paint or PhotoShop, or scanning images.

Instruction and Activities

Session One:

1. Introduce the writing activity, sharing the project planning sheet, rubric, and example *Hobbit* and *Doom Stone* bookmarks.

   a. Generally explain that students will be making bookmarks that include four parts: summary, character details, review, and related images. The bookmarks can be given away or traded with other students. One copy can also go to the librarian who can share them with other students at the school.
   b. Share one or both of the example bookmarks to explain the assignment to the students,

pointing out each of the four parts.

c. Lead students through discussion of the key elements for each part. Sample discussion questions can include the following:

   - What are the important characteristics of a summary? What do these example summaries do well?
   - Why would we want our bookmarks to keep the conclusion of the plot a secret? What does keeping it a secret accomplish?
   - How are characters described? What details make sense for our bookmarks?
   - How does a book review differ from a summary?
   - How might we indicate ranking or recommendations? (e.g., thumbs up/down, 5-star scale)
   - How do the symbols on the bookmark relate to the text? What ideas might you keep in mind as you choose clip art for your own bookmarks?

2. Once you're satisfied that students understand the assignment, they can begin work with bookmark planning sheet. Students can work individually or in groups on this project.
3. Encourage students to interact with one another, to share and receive feedback on their plans for bookmarks. Since these bookmarks will be shared in the class as well as in the library, hearing the feedback and comments of other students helps writers refine their bookmarks for their audience.
4. Students can continue working on the project for homework if desired.

Session Two:

1. Remind students of the goals and elements included in this project. Answer any questions students have.
2. To make bookmarks, have your students follow these basic steps, adapting them for the word processor that is available on your computers:
   a. Open up a new page in landscape view in their word processing program.
   b. Insert a table with 5-6 columns and equal left and right margins to make printing the back of the bookmarks easier.
   c. Copy the table and insert it on a second page (this will be the back of the bookmark).
   d. Share the example bookmarks again to help students understand the general layout:

Front of Bookmark	• the title • the author • a summary • a clip art illustration that is pertinent to the book
Back of Bookmark	• a character list with a short description • a review of the book that uses stars, thumbs-up, or a similar symbol to rate the book. • a summary • additional clip art illustrations that are pertinent to the book

   e. Remind students to put their names on the bookmark!

3. Give students time to type, proofread, and print their bookmarks. Remind them to print multiple copies if necessary to share with other students and the library.
4. While students work, again encourage them to interact with one another, to share and receive feedback on their plans for bookmarks.
5. After the bookmarks are printed out, you can laminate them or tape them together. Some students may want to add yarn or a tassel. They can also decorate with markers or other classroom supplies.
6. As students finish, ask them to turn in two bookmarks (one for you and one for the librarian). Encourage students to share and trade their additional bookmarks.

Web Resources

Plot Summary Web Page Project
http://www.iss.k12.nc.us/schools/sms/brufty/plot.htm
This page includes links to information about writing summaries as well as to clip art. It's a collection that could provide resources for your students. Be sure to check any clip art collections to ensure they are appropriate for your students.

How to Write a Book Review
http://www.van-buren.k12.ia.us/kepcurr/9th/bookreview.howtowrite.html
While written for a more extensive book review than that included on these bookmarks, the tips here on how to write a book review will provide a handy reference for students.

Microsoft's Digital Clip Art Gallery
http://dgl.microsoft.com/
If you're working with a Microsoft Word Processor, this digital clip art collection connects neatly to your word processing document. Check the images to ensure that they are appropriate for your students.

Student Assessment/Reflections

For more formal assessment, use the Rubric for Bookmark Book Reviews which is tied to the key elements included in the planning sheet: summary, review, characters, graphics, and spelling/punctuation/grammar.

On the other hand, nothing is as useful as the feedback that they'll receive by sharing their bookmarks with their peers. Informal feedback from students who read the bookmarks and search out the related book are excellent feedback for students.

NCTE/IRA Standards

3 - Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

6 - Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

11 - Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12 - Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

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Planning Sheet for Bookmark Book Reports

Summary—What are the important events that occur in the book? Remember not to reveal the conclusion!

Review—What makes this a great book? How do creativity, plot, characterization, setting, figurative language, or other features make this book one you'd recommend (or alternately one that you wouldn't recommend)?

Characters—Who are the main characters in the book? What details and specific facts would tell someone reading your bookmark the most about the character?

Relates Graphics to Book—What pictures or images can you look for that will relate to the theme/purpose of the book? What graphics will help someone reading your bookmark be more interested in the book?

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Rubric for Bookmark Book Reports

Summary	Lists all the important events that occur in the book without revealing the conclusion.	Lists most of the important events in the book without revealing the conclusion, but misses 2 or 3 major events.	Lists most of the important events in the book, but either highlights unimportant points or reveals the conclusion.	Lists some events in the book, but information is incomplete or focused on less important points.	
Review	Uses multiple criteria to judge the book, such as creativity, plot, characterization, setting, and figurative language.	Uses 1-2 criteria to judge the book.	Tries to use aesthetic criteria to judge the book, but does not apply the criteria accurately.	Evaluates work as good or bad based on personal taste.	
Characters	The main characters are named and clearly described in text as well as pictures. Most readers could describe the characters accurately.	The main characters are named and described. Most readers would have some idea of what the characters looked like.	The main characters are named. The reader knows very little about the characters.	It is hard to tell who the main characters are.	
Relates Graphics to Book	Graphics are related to the theme/purpose of the book, are thoughtfully cropped, are of high quality and enhance reader interest or understanding.	Graphics are related to the theme/purpose of the book, are of good quality and enhance reader interest or understanding.	Graphics are related to the theme/purpose of the book, and are of good quality.	Graphics seem randomly chosen, are of low quality, OR distract the reader.	
Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar	There are no spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors.	There are 1-3 spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors.	There are 4-5 spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors.	There are more than 5 spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors.	

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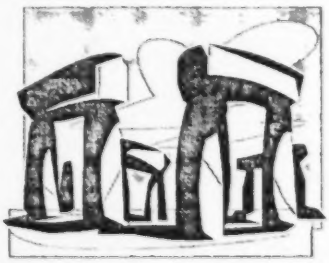
Doom Stone

By Paul Zindel

Picture a beast with deep-set red eyes, a ragged hole for a nose, razor sharp teeth, tight green skin, and eight feet tall. This is the demon that evolved from small underground rodents over millions of years.

Jackson traveled to Salisbury, England because his aunt, Doctor Cawley informs she had found a beast. He knows he should do something to help the people fighting it. So he departs to help capture the beast. Only when he comes face to face and knows that it is dangerous as people say it is, does he wish he had stayed home.

Jackson first tries to find out what the beast evolved from to find its weakness and where it came from. Then with knowledge of the monster, he leaves for a lab to find DNA information of the monster where he first confronts the monster, finds a friend named Alma to help, and finds that the creature is living at Stonehenge. After narrowly escaping the demon, he finds a small colony of rodent like monkeys, which have a resemblance to the monster. Then his aunt goes strangely insane, shouting out "Doom Stone will kill". They study the monster and find out that a stone from Stonehenge called the Doom Stone can kill it and its true name Ramid. The last scene is a climactic battle between the beast and Jackson in and on top of an ancient cathedral. Who prevail over the other?



Characters

Jackson—A fifteen year old boy with sandy hair

Alma—A European girl who helps Jackson along the journey

Ramid—A beast that had been evolved from small monkey like rodents

Dr. Cawley—Jackson's aunt, an anthropologist

Tillman—A Sargent who dies trying to fight the beast

Richardson—A gravedigger, father of Alma, also is eaten by the beast

Review

I really enjoyed this book. I like the way the author described the beast. The setting really made you feel like you were there. I loved all the exciting battles that took place in the book. I really enjoyed the beast. I wish you could have seen part of the book through the demon's eyes.

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The Hobbit

By J. R. R. Tolkein

Little Bilbo Baggins was just an innocent Hobbit that lived a simple and straightforward life. But when a wizard named Gandalf makes him an offer to go along on a dangerous adventure, Bilbo can't resist. He would travel with a band of dwarves trying to regain their long lost treasure from a dragon named Smaug who lives inside a mountain. It is a very dangerous adventure but Bilbo decides to go along as their head robber.

Their next adventure occurred when they decided to take shelter to get away from the rain. They find an indentation in the face of one of the mountains that opens up inside. When they were sleeping, a large band of goblins captured them and took them down into their tunnels. Gandalf used his magic to create a cloud smoke and sparks that gave them a chance to flee.

Along the way Bilbo found a ring that makes him invisible but at the time he didn't. While trying to find a way out, he runs into monster named Gollum who challenges Bilbo to a riddle contest. If Bilbo loses, he will be eaten, but if he wins, he will be spared. Bilbo wins and then uses his invisible ring to escape the goblin liar and he meets up with his friends.

Bilbo bails the dwarves out many times, including saving them from huge spiders. He also helps them escape from the elf prison.

They find Smaug's lair and Bilbo angers Smaug so Smaug completely destroys a village but a man named Bard shoots Smaug in the stomach with an arrow, killing him.

Characters

Bilbo Baggins is a Hobbit who is employed as the robber for a wizard and group of dwarves to steal treasure from a dragon.

Gandalf is a wizard who gives guidance and help with magic when the troop needs it.

Thorin is the dwarf in charge of the expedition and the son of the dwarves' king whose kingdom was destroyed by Smaug the dragon.

Smaug is the dragon responsible for killing and taking over the dwarves lair in the mountain. He also took all their treasures.

Beorn is a man who help the band of adventurers during the mid part of their journey. He gives them advice and a safe place to stay.

Fili is one of Thorin's dwarves on his trip, who always helps him with tasks like lookout and seeing if it's safe for the rest of the troop to pass.

This book was very entertaining. Some of the characters were peculiar which made them fun to read about. Also there were lots of exciting adventures with goblins, elves, and a dragon. The book never gets boring if you like fantasy books.

I could give this book 3/5 stars.

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